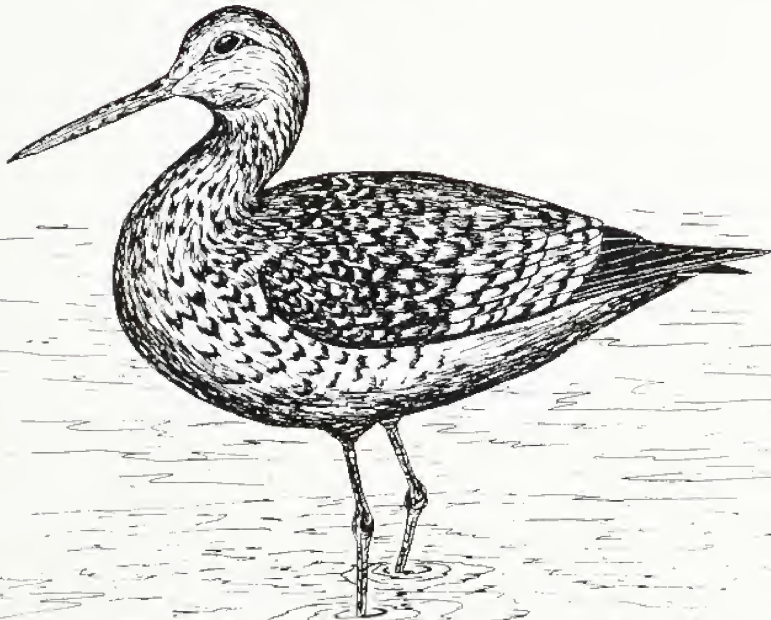


# IOWA BIRD LIFE



L. DeVolder

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## CONTENTS

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT .....	3-15
FENCEROWS FOR THE BIRDS .....	16-21
GROSBKAK IDENTIFICATION .....	22-23
FIELD REPORTS .....	23-28
GENERAL NOTES .....	28-29
OBITUARIES .....	29-30
BOOK REVIEWS .....	30-31
NOTES .....	31-32

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## EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE

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# Christmas Bird Count 1982-83

3

W. ROSS SILCOCK  
MALVERN, IOWA

This year's count showed that beautiful weather and lots of people do not necessarily guarantee a high species total. While 37 localities reported (one below last year), and a record-shattering 676 observers took part, only 112 species were found statewide, the lowest since 1977 and fully 15 less than the record 127 of 1980. However I have a feeling that this was a record-setting year in terms of enjoyment of the outdoors.

The only new count was Iowa Falls, where a very active group needed another count to accommodate all the interested folks there. North Linn was back after being snowed out last year. Not taking part this year were Oskaloosa due to scheduling problems and Spirit Lake because of a very unfortunate death causing cancellation of the count.

The distribution apparently reflects the population distribution, and covers the state fairly well except for apparent gaps in southwest and northwest Iowa, around Atlantic and Fort Dodge respectively. Counts would be very welcome from those areas.

High count again was Davenport at 67, but it took a Mew Gull (pending approval of checklist committee, data was being checked by west coast experts) and a lot of hustle to beat Shendoah at 66, the latter with an excellent waterfowl showing including Double-crested Cormorant, Ross' Goose, 221 Green-winged Teal, and a Greater Scaup. Other high counts were Clinton at 62 and DeSoto and Oakville, each with 60.

Each year there are certain localities which provide the only individual(s) of some species. This year we would have missed these species if not for these counts: Double-crested Cormorant at Shenandoah; 5 Northern Shovelers at Ottumwa; Oldsquaw and 41 Red-breasted Mergansers at Red Rock; 2 Turkey Vultures at Oakville; Mew Gull at Davenport; Snowy Owl at Sioux City; Saw-whet Owl at Cedar Falls; Carolina Wren at Lamoni; and a Lincoln's Sparrow at Princeton.

## Best Birds

Only one species new to Iowa CBCs was found this year, a Mew Gull at Davenport. Constituting the first state record, it was on the Mississippi River and seen by many observers for several days subsequent to the count day.

Other notable observations were led by an Oldsquaw at Red Rock, the first since 1976 and only the third reported in the last ten years. Also an excellent find were two Turkey Vultures at Oakville in the southeast for the first well-documented report. This species may occur on occasion in the southeast in mild years, but of course must be documented. Tundra Swan has been found the last three years but rarely previously, and this year there were two, one each at Jamaica and Rathbun. It was good to see a Carolina Wren at Lamoni, as far south as it could be and be in a CBC circle. Two more species were reported and are probably regular in Iowa in December but pose identification problems. These were Ross' Goose at DeSoto (2) and Shenandoah, and Greater Scaup with one each at DeSoto and Shenandoah.

## Notable Misses

This group bears study this year owing to the rather low species total. Species listed on the reporting form as expected on Iowa CBCs but not found included: Pied-billed Grebe, which has been seen 6 of the last 10 years but is rather irregular; and three winter finches, as everyone who feeds birds might have guessed: Evening Grosbeak, seen 9 of the last 10 years, Red Crossbill, seen 6 of 10, and White-winged Crossbill, seen 4 of 10. Removed from the list for this year but



probably belonging was Clauous Gull, missed again this year but seen 7 of the last 10. Yellow-headed Blackbird, seen 4 of the last 5 years in southeast Iowa, was also missed this year. Hermit Thrush and Yellow-rumped Warbler, each seen 8 of the last 10 years, were both missed, as was Bohemian Waxwing, reported 5 of the last 10 years.

#### Record Numbers

Single locality totals setting records this year were:

Turdra Swan .....	1 each at Jamaica and Rathbun (tie)
White-fronted Goose .....	35 at DeSoto
Ross' Goose .....	2 at DeSoto
Gadwall .....	16 at Shenandoah
Turkey Vulture .....	2 at Oakville
Golden Eagle .....	2 at Decorah
American Kestrel .....	36 at Lamoni
Mew Gull .....	1 at Davenport (new to count)
Black-capped Chickadee .....	716 at Cedar Rapids
White-breasted Nuthatch .....	185 at Cedar Rapids
Winter Wren .....	9 at Yellow River Forest
Rufous-sided Towhee .....	5 at Omaha

#### Identification Comments

This year the only reported species that was not included in the final tally was Yellow-headed Blackbird. Ten were reported from Rathbun with no comment, and I suspect this was a reporting error, as only 12 Red-winged Blackbirds were seen at the same count.

The only other problem in a generally well reported year was Eastern Meadowlark. Red Rock reported "2 Eastern and 4 uncertain" meadowlarks and Rathbun listed "4 Eastern, studied carefully". However, as no details of identification were given, these were deleted. It is important to note here that Barbara Wilson of Hastings is researching the winter meadowlarks of the midwest and has yet to find a winter specimen of Eastern Meadowlark in any of the collections in the midwest, including major museums. Her studies have also shed considerable light on the winter plumages and molt sequences of the meadowlarks and her published data is eagerly awaited. I am trying to arrange a workshop on this subject at the Shenandoah Spring IOU meeting this April.

Two species not on the expected list were reported without comment but included as both were adequately described from other locations. These were Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Gr. White-fronted Goose, both at Des Moines. White-fronted Goose needs to be described unless seen in the west, as indicted on the list. Note that the lone Snow Goose at Iowa City was well-documented. In such cases it is perhaps most important to indicate that the bird was indeed wild.

#### Population Comments

Following are what I consider to be some interesting aspects of the numbers reported this year.

**Great Blue Heron:** Possibly the best year yet, with 22 reported from all parts of the state. The highest total for the last 8 years was 8.

**Snow Goose:** In contrast with Canada Goose, 99.9 percent of the Snows are found at DeSoto, Omaha, and Shenandoah in the southwest. However 5 were at Dubuque and one at Iowa City.

**Northern Goshawk:** No surprise that this was an invasion year, with 11 reported. The previous high was the 9 in 1973-74, also as invasion year. Goshawks were found throughout the state, no count reporting more than two. The locality

record is 5, seen at Omaha 1973-74.

**Buteos:** Red-tails were in normal numbers, while Rough-legs were at the low end of their normal range. Again low were Red-shoulders, with only four seen. This is worrying, when viewed in light of the fact that Davenport has the locality record with 22 seen in 1959. This species has obviously declined drastically since then.

**American Kestrel:** This was a record year for this species, with 317 reported, far above the previous high of 234, last year. A locality record was set at Lamoni, with 36 seen there. This species has increased in numbers most of the last 8 years.

**Common Bobwhite:** This year's total of 121 was by far the lowest the last 8 years. The last three years have averaged 506. Severe weather last winter and a damp summer had their effect on this species.

**Wild Turkey:** Nine locations reported 124 birds total, compared with one location and two birds 8 years ago. This species is doing very well after reintroduction in many areas within Iowa.

**Mourning Dove:** The 549 found this year was an 8-year low, and of the total, 159 were at DeSoto. The past three years averaged 1,040. This species normally lingers in mild weather, also perhaps breeding success was off this year, again due to wet summer weather.

**Pileated Woodpecker:** Also in normal numbers, with 45 reported, as expected from a sedentary species which is not obviously expanding its range. Most were reported from the Mississippi valley, but as far west and north as Eldora.

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** A rather erratic winterer, dependent on acorns mostly, numbers were down markedly to 326 from the last three years' average of 1,409, but not as low as four years ago, when only 58 were found.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** This year's total of 10 was the lowest in the past 8 years. The last three years have been good, averaging 36, but prior to that the three-year average was only 14. It is hard to explain why numbers were down this year, although possibly mild weather allowed some birds to stay north of Iowa.

**Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, Snow Bunting:** Numbers of these species usually fluctuate together, depending mostly on snow cover, and as expected, all three were down somewhat from previous years, especially last year. However more were found than in the mild winter of two years ago, when only 235 birds total of all three species were found. Last year's total was 6,352 and this year's 1,257, only 9 of which were Snow Buntings.

**White-breasted Nuthatch:** This species is doing well, with numbers increasing over the past 8 years, to 2,106 this year, including a new locality record at Cedar Rapids of 185.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** This year and last year were good years, with 133 and 164 respectively. The total for the three years prior to these two was only 152.

**Winter Wren:** An outstanding year, most likely due to the many open streams providing more habitat. A locality record of 9 at Yellow River Forest helped the total of 26 statewide, compared with only three in last year's severe winter. The most recent high was 18, found 4 years ago.

**Carolina Wren:** Only two have been found in the last four years, whereas in 1976-77 there were 29 reported. Obviously a drastic decline, due to the severe winters of the past few years. We seem to be in a long-term cyclic low.

**American Robin:** This year only 254 were found statewide, compared with 3,190 three years ago and a 7-year average of 908. It is usually very unevenly distributed in the state: of this year's 254, 153 were at Omaha, and in 1981-82, 234 of the total 447 were at DeSoto. This pattern exists for each of the last 7 years, where half or more of the Robins found occur at one or at most two locations. This species is very gregarious in winter and very dependent on fruit crops.



**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** The last six years have shown a large increase from only 18 birds reported in 1977-78 to this year's 282, despite a few tough winters. The increase has been steady, with 18, 58, 85, 105, and 282 reported.

**Shrikes:** Numbers were about normal. As expected, Northern's were found in the north and Loggerheads in the south. However two Northern's were in the south: one each at Cedar Rapids (borderline) and Tristate in the extreme southwest. Similarly, 3 of the 20 Loggerheads reported were in the north: 2 at Sioux City and one at Cherokee, all in the northwest.

**Evening Grosbeak:** As mentioned above, none were found this year, compared with 9 last year and 123 the year before. The last 7 years have averaged only 26, including the 123 two years ago. Always a rather uncommon bird in Iowa in December.

**Common Redpoll:** A so-so year, with 91 reported, although 75 of these were in one flock at DeSoto. Last year had 113, three years ago there were none, and the most recent good year was five years ago with 468.

**Pine Siskin:** A poor year for this species, the second lowest in the past seven. The meager 25 reported was only marginally higher than the 14 of three years ago. These numbers are dwarfed by the 1,173 of last year and the 960 the year before that.

**American Goldfinch:** This species has shown good numbers the past three years, averaging 3,434.

**Harris Sparrow:** This year's total of 192 for this western species was the lowest for the last 7 years, which have averaged 383, with a high of 591 five years ago. Mild weather may have allowed more northerly wintering.

**White-crowned Sparrow:** This species also showed a 7-year low, possibly for the same reasons as Harris' Sparrow. This year only 24 were reported, versus a 7-year average of 85 and a high of 154 five years ago. This species and the Harris' Sparrow appear to fluctuate together, although the White-crowned is more statewide in its distribution.

1. ALLEMAN (15 mile diameter circle centered on Alleman and including Big Creek Lake, Chichaqua Wildlife Refuge, Jester Park, Saylorville Dam north to Jester Park, and areas between these locations.) Dec. 26: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear sky perfect day for late December; Temp. 10-35 F., No wind, ground bare, some open water. Feeder party hours 9, 3 by foot and 6 by car; field party miles 4 by foot and 85 by car.

Observers (3) in 1 party: Dean Mosman (compiler), Diane Mosman and Mike Mosman.

2. AMES (Center Jct. I-35 and Highway 30.) Dec. 28: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. 40 observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours 273.5 - 180 on foot, 93.5 by car; party-miles, 357.5 - 81.5 on foot, 276 by car; Clear to partly cloudy; Temp.: 32 to 45 F.; wind: 1-10 mph from south.

Observers: Ralph Akkerman, John Balinsky, George and Gordon Brown, Cecelia Burnett, Barney Cook, Tom Davis, Mark and Steve Dinsmore, Jack Dodd, Anna and David and Jeanne Edwards, Fritz Franzen, Sven Gafvert, Janet Graver, Janice Heling, Cindy Hildebrand, Gloria Hughes, Stu Huntington, Eino Kainlahti, Kevin Kause, Ken Krantz, Paul Martsching, John Mayfield, Lotus and Wilmer Miller, Diane Mumm, James Murdock, David Newhouse, Richard Nuss, Sue Pinnette, Steve Richards, Bill Robbins, Judy Shearer, Dick Trump, Judy and Peter van der Linden, Fred Whitford, Hank Zaletel (compiler).

3. BURLINGTON (Center Highway 99 at Flint Creek Bridge.) Dec. 18: 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. 42-56 F.; wind: 5-10 from SW; ground bare, water mostly open; weather good, partly cloudy to sunny - very mild. Field parties 5;

feeder observers 2; field party hours, foot 9, car 28; field party miles foot 23, car 196.

Observers: Jerry Bloomer, Terry Conrad, Tom Francis, Charles Fuller (compiler), James and Jane Fuller, Barry Geng, Harriet Holsteen, Steve Kauffman, Anna Mae Lowther, Lynn McKeown, Barbara Morrison and Irene Schnicker.

4. CEDAR FALLS (Intersection of Main Street and U.S. Highway 20 in Cedar Falls as described 1981.) Dec. 19: 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 26 to 34 F.; wind: 15-25 mph from NW. Mostly clear and windy all day, ground bare, all water mostly open. Feeder observers 2, feeder party hours 4 plus owling hours 2; field parties 6, field party hours, foot 26, car 17 bicycle 4; field party miles foot 23, car 221, bicycle 20 plus 5 owling miles.

Comments: Higher than normal winds kept birds hidden and hard to find (most species). A Screech Owl was found by use of a tape player in the early hours of the day.

Observers (16) George Bebout, Viola Bebout, Ruth Buck, Antoinette Camarata, Eleanor Corwin, Russell Hays, Dennis Hendrickson, Peter Lowther, Francis Moore (compiler), Bob Myers, Ethel Phol, Lois Sherman, Tom Stone, Tom Stone, Jr., Opal Uhr and Harold White.

5. CEDAR RAPIDS (Center Federal Building in Cedar Rapids, as described 1971.) Dec. 18: 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Sunny and clear all day. Temp. 31 to 48 F.; wind: 5-15 mph from W; ground bare, most ponds and lakes fully frozen; all streams open. Field parties 14; field party hours, foot 76, car 43; 7½ owling; field party miles, foot 78, car 547, plus 50 miles owling.

Comments: Counts of many landbirds seem down this year, even though I felt we did a good job comparatively of covering the area. Only chickadees and White-br. Nuthatches seemed more common than usual. I think there is less food for most, so there are fewer individuals than usual.

Observers: Rob and Karen Bradley, Duane Carr, Keith Carris, John Daniel, Floy Erickson, Dale Fye, Karl and Ruth Goellner, Linda Gucciardo, Harlo and Joy Hadow, Irene Haerther, Charles Hamilton, Marla Hansen, Jim Landenberger, Beryl Layton, Lucile Liljedahl, Gertrude Lippisch, Ken Lowder, Darryl Matthews, Jim Messina, Weir Nelson, Fred Nissen, Roberta Oppedahl, Tim Ramsey, Gayle Wallace, David and Mike Wehde, Rick Welch, Pete Wickham (compiler), Rowe Zekmo, Martha Zipsie and Aldrich Zobac.

6. CHEROKEE (Center 2 miles south of Larrabee on U.S. 59.) Dec. 19: 6:15 to 4 p.m. Temp. 32-44 F.; Hazy and humid, overcast, wind: 5-15 mph from NW in a.m., SW in p.m.; 1 inch of snow in the timber; ponds 100 percent frozen, creeks and river 50 percent. Field parties 6; feeder observers 5; field party hours, foot 23, car 40; feeder party hours 8; field party miles, foot 234, car 375.

Comments: Used tape of Screech Owl to assist in finding small birds.

Observers: Bertie, Joe, Sandi and Karl Beals, Vernon, Dick and Judy Bierman (compiler), Bill and Brownie Borrink, Marion Brewer, Larry Farmer, Bill and Melba Grawburg, Irwin Heusinkveld, Jan and Jim Huber, Bill Huser, Bob and Randy Kirchner, Mark Phelps, Mildred Thompson and Shirley Wahlstrom.

7. CLINTON (Center Elk River Jct. as in previous years.) Jan. 1: 6:10 a.m. to 5:10 p.m. Field parties 5; field party hours, foot 16, car 27½; field party miles, foot 17½, car 381. Temp. 26-38 F.; wind: 8-15 mph from SW. Clear a.m., cloudy p.m. No snow and no ice cut numbers; ground bare, water open.

Comments: Brewer's Blackbirds with C. Grackles both males. id. by size in comparison to Grackles, smaller bills and gloss - 100 yards, 20x scope, P.P.

Observers: Ann Barker, Brian, Corey, Lewis and Vera Blevins, Larry Dolphin, Fred Leshar, Judy and Larry Linder, Kelly McKay, Francis Moore, Peter C. Petersen (compiler), Clark Scott, Jerry Selby, Paul Van Nieuwenhuysen.



8. DAVENPORT (Center former toll house of I-74 bridge, same as previous years.) Dec. 19: 5:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 11, feeder observers 11; field party hours, foot 31, car 50; feeder party hours 22; field party miles, foot 29, car 480. Temp. 30-34; wind: 15-25 mph from NW; ground bare; water open, overcast.

Comments: Lack of snow cover and ice on river and strong wind cut count. Golden Eagle in Illinois. Seen during count period: C. Bobwhite, Thayer's Gull, (in Ill.), Ringed Turtle Dove (in Ia.).

Observers: Jerry and Marilyn Aanes, Ann Barker, Mrs. T. Behr, Corey, Lewis and Vera Blevins, Brad and Dennis Boyd, Bob and Walt Dau, Dale Dickinson, Elton Fawks, Jean Goldsberry, Bob Hansen, Mary Hawkinson, Dick Hazel, Gene Hollen, Thomas Kent, Bob Linden, Larry Linder, Jenny Martin, Kelly McKay, Don and Jean Moeller, Ralph Money, Mary Lou and Peter Petersen (compiler), Harold Ray, Wendy Scheffert, Clark Scott, Thomas Standt, Mr and Mrs. Leonard Swanson, Ralph Troll, Cal Werner.

9. DECORAH (Center NE corner S24, T99N, R8W.) Dec. 18: 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 5; field party hours, foot 11, car 23; field party miles, foot 19, car 332. 31-42; wind: 5-15 mph from S-NW; Mostly clear a.m., partly cloudy p.m.; 1-3 inches

Observers: Florence Albright, Francis Arness, Elizabeth Bottorff, Alan Branhagen, Garth Carlson, Oivind Hovde, Darwin Koenig (compiler), Paul Koenig, Tobin Lauresen, Marlene Michel, Arnold and Dolores Rohm, Joe Schaufenbuel, Erick Sessions, Heidi Swets and Warren Wicks.

10. DES MOINES (Center 63rd and University.) Dec. 18: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Field parties 21, feeder observers 1; field party hours, foot 26, car 11½; feeder party hours 8; field party miles, foot 20½, car 201. Temp. 37-52 F., wind: 0-15 mph a.m., SW, p.m. NW, ground bare, water partly open, mostly clear.

Observers: Eloise and Eugene Armstrong (compiler), Bill Boller, Margaret Brooke, Randy Brose, Ruth Buckles, Jane Clark, Libby Coite, Mark Dixon, Bery Engebretson, Oliver Graves, Laura Greffinius, Gladys Haskell, John and Maggie Hoogerheide, Joe Kennedy, Rene Laubach, Pauly and Richard Mooney, Mark Rouw, Dennis Thompson and Laurene Wartens.

11. DeSOTO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, IA. (Center refuge headquarters as described in 1978.) Dec. 19: 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Twenty-nine observers, 28 in 7 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours 55¾ (21¼ on foot, 34½ by car, plus 2 hours at feeders, 4 owling; total party-miles 401, 25 on foot, 376 by car plus 15 miles owling. Temp. 24-46 F. Wind: 5 to 15 mph from E.; ground bare, partly cloudy.

Observers: Herman Badberg, Leola Badberg, Scott Baumfalk, Marjorie Birkmann, Tanya Bray, Jim Conway, Charlie Frisk, Allen Grenon, Betty Grenon, Lori Hahn, Kris Hoffman, Thomas Hoffman, Jim Kovanda, Sandy Kovanda, Carey Martin, Dave Menke (compiler), Brad Montgomery, Steve Moorman, Babs Padelford, Loren Padelford, Neal Ratzlaff, Lisa Shafer, Ross Silcock, Rick Sojda, Bob Starr, Eric Volden, Tom Walker, Barb Wilson and Jeff Witt.

12. DUBUQUE (Center Center Grove Cemetery.) Dec. 18: 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Field parties 8; feeder observers 2; field party hours, foot 24, car 21; feeder party hours 4; field party miles, foot 27, car 204. Clear a.m., mostly clear afternoon; trace of snow; water mostly open. Temp. 32-44 F., wind: 8-15 mph from S to W.

Comments: Turkey Vultures seen during the count period. Many Snow Geese had been staying at Wildlife Refuge near Cassville, Wis. and were chased out by fishermen when hunting closed. Tundra Swans had been on the river near John Deere north of Dubuque until about a week before the count. (Info furnished by Bob Walton of Swiss Valley Nature Center).

Observers: Glenna Baughton, Marilyn Conklin, Frieda and George Crossley (compiler), Peter Ernzen, Adele and John Feller, David Hartig, Harry Herold,



Joan Highley, Brian Larson, Judy Limage, John Lohberg, Delbert Ludwig, Robert McComish, John and Leta Miller, Leslie and Steven Neyens, Betty Nobis, James Rooks, John Stampe, Phyllis Shultz, Nathan Terwilliger, Roger Thiede, Robert and Sandra Walton, Robert and Wauneta Wiederaenders, Jan and Robert Williams, Charles and Gretel Winterwood. (Dubuque Audubon Society).

13. ELDORA (Center two miles north of Union on Highway 215 — area includes Grammer Grove, Bates, Long and Reece Parks, and Pine Lake with roadsides and fields in between.) Dec. 18: 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Field parties 4, feeder observers 5; field party hours, foot 21¾, car 9¼; feeder party hours 14½; field party miles, foot 23½, car 208. Temp. 38-42 F.; wind: 10-20 mph from S.W., Fair to partly cloudy — a gorgeous count day; sparse, patchy snow from bare to 1"; creeks and river 100 percent open, lake 90 percent ice covered; below dam open stream to river.

Comments: Better coverage was obtained with more people participating, resulting in increase of 8 species. Pileated Woodpeckers have been observed since August. Noted lack of northern winter birds.

Observers (16 in 4 parties, including 5 at feeders) Barbara Ashby, Winnifred Crosley, Marsha Eller, John Graham, Phyllis Harris, Arloene Mannetter, Beth, Carl and Mark Proescholdt, Ruby Rook, Garnita Seward, Dan, Leslie and Nancy Slife, Ramona Sommerlot (compiler) and Larry Stone.

14. IOWA CITY (Center intersection of U.S. 218 and Co. Rd. F-28, w. of North Liberty, Johnson Co.) Dec. 18: 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Field parties 9; field party hours, foot 40, car 29; feeder party hours 3; field party miles, foot 43, car 498. Clear, most pleasant day in years. Temp. 36-52 F.; wind: 0-7 mph from SW; ground bare, streams, river, and large lakes open; shallow areas frozen.

Comments: Generally few birds, good water birds, winter finches lacking.

Observers: Carl and John Bendorf, Corey Blevins, John Cordell, Bud Gode, Lanny Haldy, Rick Hollis, Bernie Hoyer, Tom Kent (compiler), Bernie and Carl Knight, Bob Lechner, Ramona McGurk, Dawson Mohler, Peter Petersen, Anne and Terry Perkins, Angela and Dan Ray, Jim Sandrock, Marlyn Smith, Tom Staudt, Kent Stiverson, Dick Tetrault, Carol Thompson, Ruth Williams. (Iowa City Bird Club).

15. IOWA FALLS (Center Highway 65 at Iowa Falls Airport entrance includes Iowa River Valley Greenbelt, conservation areas and country roads.) Dec. 30: 7:45 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Field parties 2, feeder observers 4; field party hours, foot 10, car 7; feeder party hours 20; field party miles, foot 19½, car 76. Temp. 16-30 F. Mostly sunny day with light overcast in the p.m. Wind: 10-15 mph from S. from noon on. 80 percent - 100 percent new snow cover 1-3"; northern part of county area ice covered; rivers and streams open except portions of backwater and small ponds.

Comments: Harlan's Hawk observed by all.

Observers (field 7 in 2 parties), feeder 4): Bob Anders, Homer Calkins, Mrs. Don Fejfar, Phyllis Harris, Betty Kness, Arloene Mannetter, Beth Proescholdt, Dan Slife, Leslie Slife, Nancy Slife (compiler), Marilyn Tjarks.

16. JAMAICA (Center 3½ south and 2 miles west of Jamaica; Dec. 23: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 1; feeder observers 3; field party hours, car 115; feeder party hours 11.5; field party miles, car miles. Temp. 40-45 F. wind: 0-7 mph from W. Overcast, fog throughout the day, limit visibility from 50-600 yds.; snow in very sheltered spots only; running water open, all lakes and ponds frozen.

Comments: New to count this year were the Golden-crowned Kinglet and Tundra Swan. Missed for the first time in 8 years were the Red-headed Woodpecker and Horned Lark.

Observers: Gene Burns, Ray Cummings (compiler), Bill Heusinkveldt, Shirley Hughes and Bob and Thelma Richey.

17. KEOSAUQUA (Center Keosauqua, Van Buren Co., Iowa.) Jan. 2: 7 a.m. to

4:30 p.m. Field parties 2; feeder observers 3; field party hours, car 9½; feeder party hours 6; field party miles, foot 7, car 47. Temp. 27-33 F.; wind 0-15 mph from NW, morning cloudy, afternoon sunny; ground bare; water areas open, Des Moines River and creeks high.

Comments: Open mild winter in this area means birds are still widely scattered. Gulls appeared as flock after flock, flying upstream. Eagles, all along the Des Moines River, included 15 adults and 17 immatures.

Observers: Vern Downard, Ann Faulkner, Dick Fisher, Kathy Fisher (compiler), Oneita Fisher, Willard Hoskin, Ada Lazenby, Dave Lazenby, Mike Ross, Dawn Strait.

18. LAMONI (Center (intersection I-35 and U.S. 69 east of Lamoni.) Dec. 18: 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Field parties 4, field party hours, foot 4, car 25; field party miles, foot 7, car 205. Temp. 30-46; wind: 8-12 mph from W., clear, ground bare, ponds frozen, streams partly frozen.

Comments: Many birds scarce or absent. Many locations of big bales of hay stored in rows on ground along road have a lone Am. Kestrel on nearby utility wires.

Observers: Willie Barnett, David Carter, Genevieve DeLong, J. Donald Gillaspey (compiler), Jim Gillaspey, Clark Livingston, Jeff Livingston, Dan Long, Dale and Frances Moon and Arladine Nelson.

19. LOST NATION (A 15-mile diameter circle centered approximately 1½ miles south of Lost Nation and including Mockridge Wildlife Refuge, Wapsipinnicon River, Eden Valley Refuge and Syracuse State Wildlife Area.) Dec. 21: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field party hours, foot 15, car 20½; feeder party hours 1½; field party miles, foot 11, car 238. Temp. 21-40 F.; wind: 5-10 mph from SE; mostly clear, ground bare; open water on the Wapsipinnicon River. Sloughs partially frozen, drainage ditches mostly open water.

Comments: Tape recorder used to attract owls and other birds.

Observers: Corey Blevins, Bob Bryant, Larry Dolphin (compiler), Nancy Dolphin, Paul Heuen, Judy Linder, Pete Petersen, Jeanette Ruprecht, Bob Schaefer, Clark Scott, Dave Searle, Jerry and Lois Selby, Rose Snell, Charlie and June Wentworth, Jack Wohlstradter.

20. MARBLE ROCK. Dec. 23; 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Field parties 1, feeder observers 1; field party hours, foot 4½, car 4½; feeder party hours 5½; field party miles, foot 6, car 56. Temp. 27-30 F. Ground bare. Heavy overcast and foggy all morning, visibility extremely limited (one tenth to three-tenths mile) weather changed to overcast and constant rain from noon on, causing early termination of morning, visibility extremely limited (one tenth to three-tenths mile) weather couldn't get into some usual locations because streams were too high. Carl Knoop said that the last time the river was this open and almost this high was 1965.

Comments: Great Blue Heron was a new species for the count. Pheasant and Cardinal numbers were low. Owl tapes were used during early morning. Also seen in count period: Snow Bunting and Rough-legged Hawk, the day after count; White-throated Sparrow the day before.

Observers: Pearl Knoop and Tom Staudt (compiler).

21. MARSHALLTOWN (Center E27 one mile east of highway 14 and including Union Grove Lake, same as previous years.) Dec. 18: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Field parties 7; feeder observers 4; field party hours, foot 17½, car 20½; feeder party hours 8; field party miles, foot 14½, car 167. Temp. 34-45; wind: 5-15 mph from SW. Clear early with high thin clouds developing later in the day, it was more like a spring day than winter. Ground bare, Iowa River completely open, Union Grove Lake less than 10 percent open, small streams open.

Comments: Other birds seen during count period, Common Grackle, Rufous-



## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

11

sided Towhee, Western race — at Savage residence. We had two reports of Field Sparrows, no one wanted to fill out documentation sheet.

Observers: George and Vera Crowther, Freida Dipple, Norm and Jean Eige, Grant and Ruth Frier, Laura Glasgow, Ken and Jeanette Graham, Carl and Glendora Hollingsworth, Marlys Huff, John and Francis King, Carl Kurtz, Les and Donna Lawrence, Judy Levings, Carol McMillan, Jim and Pauline Mairs, Jim and Dorothy Maish, Les and Perle Ralston, Betty and Ed Savage (compiler) Fox and Murdell Wheeler.

23. MASON CITY (Centered on intersection of S56 and B25 including Shell Rock Preserve and other conservation areas.) Dec. 18: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Field parties 6, feeder observers 5; field party hours, foot 20, car 28; feeder party hours 20; field party miles, foot 20, car 197. Temp. 34-45 F.; wind: 10-15 mph from W. Clear, light snow cover; rivers and streams open, marshes partly frozen.

Comments: Pheasant numbers were very low. No Gray Partridge were seen during count period. Both seem to have suffered from last year's severe winter and a poor nesting season.

Observers: Dorothy Brunner, M.M. Brunner, Russell Brunner, Dorothy Coates, Kay Elsbury, Vergil Eness, Thelma Fromm, Leora Gildner, Norma Grekoff, Pat and Daryl Hansen, Jim Hansen, Jim Heintzman, Alma Little, Beth McBride, Curt Nelson (compiler), Genevieve and Richard Nelson, Les Paulsen, Reva and Harold Pedelty, Edna Peters, Cecil Roberts and Jan and Jim Walters.

23. MUSCATINE (Center Lock & Dam 16 as in previous years.) Dec. 26: 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Field parties 5, feeder observers 1; field party hours, foot 11½, car 32½; feeder party hours 3; field party miles, foot 10, car 329; Temp. 28-24 F; wind: 5-10 mph from SE. Ground bare, water areas open, overcast, no snow and no ice cut numbers.

Comments: Ruby-crowned Kinglet - eye-ring seen. L.B.

Observers: Jerry Aanes, Ann and Bill Barker, Brian, Corey and Lewis Blevins, Tim Dwyer, Don Graves, Judy and Larry Linder, Kelly McKay, Peter C. Petersen (compiler), Gil Sandvick, Howard Worst.

24. NORTH LINN (Center 42 degrees 12' N 91 degrees 35' W Rogers Crossing NE corner sect. 7 Maine Township, Linn Co., Iowa.) Dec. 29: 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Temp. 12-30 F; wind: 5-15 W-NW; Mostly cloudy early, wind died off as day progressed and skies cleared somewhat in p.m. Ground bare, water mostly open. Field parties 8, field party hours, foot 38, car 36; field party miles, foot 99, car 494; feeder observers 2; feeder party hours 15.

After last year's blizzard, it's good to have the count going again. We're learning more about the area and feel a good year could yield in the middle 50's in land birds.

Observers: Norman Byers, Duane Carr, Keith Carris, Dale Fye, Linda Gucciardo, Will Holub, Julia Ladd, Beryl Layton, Lucille Liljedahl, Jim Messina, Jim Murdick, Brian Nelson, Weir Nelson (compiler), Mike Nolan, Roberta Oppedahl, Fred Thompson, Gayle Wallace, Pete Wickham, Kelly Yarnes, Rowe Zehms, Cedar Rapids Audubon Chapter).

25. OAKVILLE (Center 4 mi. e. of New Boston, Ill.) Dec. 31, 6:05 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Field parties 5, field party hours, foot 15; car 28; field party miles, foot 16; car 390. Temp. 28-33 F.; wind: 5-8 mph from SW. Ground bare; water open, Clear. No snow and river ice lowered totals.

Observers: Bill Bertrand, Corey and Lewis Blevins, Dale Dickinson, Larry and Judy Linder, Beth Mast, Kelly McKay, Lynn McKeown, Peter C. Petersen (compiler), Gil Sandvick, Clark Scott, Ed Wiederrecht.

26. OMAHA, NEB. (Center Offutt Air Force Base Lake, as described 1971.) Dec. 18: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 12, field party hours, foot 62, car 23; field





[illegible]

party miles foot 59.5, car 384; feeder observers 1; feeder party hours 2; Temp. 40-55 F. wind: calm to 14 mph from SW. Clear, no snow cover; water mostly closed.

Observers: Russell Benedict, Tanya Bray, Graham Chisholm, Kelly Clarke, James Conway, Terry Cox, Jim Ducey, Douglas Fritz, James Glathar, Ruth Green, Alan Grenon, Betty Grenon, Mary Harberg, Sherry Harvey, Rev. Thomas Hoffman, Gladys Johnson, Eunice Kawamoto, Joanne Kawamoto, Ray Korpi, Jim and Sandy Kovanda, David Menke, Stephen Mitten, Ralph Morocco, Wanda Neaderheiser, Loren and Babs Padelford, Jean Richter, Phil Swanson, Chet Thomas, Priscilla Tubbs, Ray Vodicka, Rick Wright (compiler).

27. OTTUMWA (Center Highway 34-63 intersection.) Dec. 19: 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Field parties 4; field party hours, foot 6; field party miles, foot 10, car 73; Temp. 31-38 F.; wind 15-25 mph from WNW. The wind seemed to keep the birds under cover. Ground bare; ponds iced over, Des Moines River open.

I believe this is one of our lowest counts in birds sighted, species and observers.

Observers: Charles and Darlene Ayres, Bill Chestnut, Chuck and Ann Current, Nelson Hoskins (compiler), Don and Elaine Johnson, Gary Wymore and Madelyn Wymore.

28. PRINCETON (Center Folletts, Iowa.) Dec. 22: 6 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Field parties 5; field party hours, foot, 13, car 23; field party miles, foot 12, car 335; Temp. 32-48 F.; wind: 5-8 mph from SE. Clear a.m., overcast p.m.; ground bare; water open.

Lack of snow and ice caused fewer birds.

Observers: Brett Ashford, Brian, Corey and Lewis Blevins, Larry and Nancy Dolphin, Elton Fawks, Kelly McKay, Don and Jean Moeller, Mary Lou and Peter C. Petersen (compiler), and Clark Scott.

29. RATHBUN (Center 2 miles s. of Rathbun Lake.) Dec. 18: 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 8; field party hours, foot 8, car 60; est. field party miles, foot 3; car unknown. Clear; Temp. 36 to 50 F.; wind: 0-5 mph West. Ground bare. Rathbun Lake level had been excessively high all summer destroying vegetation and was still excessively high at the time of the count. Lake was mostly ice covered.

Observers: Charles and Darleen Ayers, Dorothy Cornett, Enid Coulter, Ray Cummins, Bill and Doris Cummings, Roger and Sandy Griffing, Bill (compiler) and Marj Heusinkveld, Mark Hoffman, Nelson Hoskins, Kay Malmberg, Mary Montgomery, Paul Rodgers, Charlotte Scott and Marcia Thomas.

30. RED ROCK (Center Hwy. 14 bridge over Lake Red Rock.) Dec. 19: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 9; field party hours, foot 12, car 40; field party miles, foot 12, car 300; feeder observers 7; feeder party hours 16. Temp. 32-35 F.; wind: 12-15 mph from NW. Mostly cloudy; ground bare; Lake Red Rock, 20 percent ice cover; creeks open.

Observers: Eugene and Eloise Armstrong, Gladys Black, Gene and Marilyn Burns, Bill Burrell, Maxine Crane, Vic Doughtrey, Edith and Herb Dorow, Paul and Mary Felsing, Dale and Helen Fye, Bill Gibert, Greg Hartgraver, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Johnson, Ron Helm, Joe Kennedy, Emory and Maxine Loose, John McGlothlen (compiler), Dick and Pauley Mooney, David Newhouse, Paul Regnier, Mark Rouw, John and Jon Stravers, Sandra Strong, Dennis Thompson, Robert and Joe Thornburg, Rick Trine, Ron Watts, Bernie Wolf.

31. SAC COUNTY (Center Clem and Rita Efta residence, Grant City, Auburn, Iowa 51433.) Dec. 18: 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Field parties 3; field party hours, foot 12, car 6; field party miles, foot 11, car 122; feeder observers 4; feeder party hours 13. Temp. 35-46 F.; wind: 7-15 mph from W-NW. High clouds, no precipitation, good visibility. Patchy light snow; Raccoon River, open to partly frozen, Blackhawk Lake, partly frozen.



## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

15

Observers: Lonnie Brown, Bunny Clapper, Clem and Rita Efta (compiler), Lucille Fast, Glenn and Betty Jones, Linda Kuhlman, Clara Meyer, Gordy Miller, Opal Schulte, Margaret Seeck and Eva Wiedemeyer.

32. SHENANDOAH (Center Farragut.) Dec. 18: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field party hours, foot 16, car 13; field party miles, foot 16, car 214; feeder observers 1; feeder party hours 5. Temp. 37-50 F.; wind: 0-5 mph from SW. Clear to partly cloudy. Ground bare; fresh water partly open.

Comments: Seen during count week, Purple Finch.

Observers: Becky Bernthal, Barbara Cunningham, Charles Gee, Ione Getscher, Jacque and Ross Silcock, Marie Spears, Dan Varland, Mary Beth Vaughn, Betty Walters (compiler), Barbara Walters.

33. SIOUX CITY. Dec. 18: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 10; field party hours foot 34, car 20; field party miles, foot 40; car 255. Clear. Temp. 37-49 F. wind: 13-20 mph from W. 1" or less snow; Missouri River open, most water frozen, open in spots.

Comments: Mild weather and a good turnout of observers.

Observers: Kurt Dean, Larry Farmer, Brad Grier, Marla Grier, Bill Huser, Marge Kennedy, Ray Kennedy, Bob Livermore, Bob Nickolson (compiler), David A. Pierce, Jerry Probst, Donna Sisson, Barb Stone, Dale Stone, Keith Weaver, Marcie Weaver, Morgan Webb, Douglas Wheelock.

34. TRISTATE (Center mile 555 in Missouri River.) Dec. 30: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 3; field party hours, foot 3½, car 24½; field party miles, foot 3½, car 269; Excellent day, but icy roads. Ice storm early in week followed by snow. Temp. 16-32 F.; wind: 0-5 mph from SW. 1-6" snow; drainage ditches Fremont Co. and Missouri R. open ponds frozen.

Observers: Tanya Bray, Ione Getscher, Babs Padelford, Tacye Pedersen, B.J. Rose, Ross Silcock (compiler), Barbara Wilson.

35. WATERLOO (42 degrees 43' N. 92 degrees 14' W, center at center of Sec. 2, Maxfield Twp., Bremer Co., Iowa as described 1973.) Dec. 18: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 4; field party hours, foot 20, car 17; field party miles, foot 23.5, car 305. Temp 35-47 F.; wind: 5-15 mph from West; Clear; up to 1" snow; water with any current was open.

Comments: The nice count day plus the mild open winter so far kept several late migrant species in our area and enabled us to set a new record for number of species observed.

Observers: George Bebout, Viola Bebout, Audrey Burk, Antoinette Camarata, Dennis Edgar, Russell Hays, Lowell Jons, Peter Lowther, Francis Moore, Mark Muller, Bob Myers (compiler), Tom Stone and Opal Uher.

36. WESTFIELD (Center Section 16, Sioux Township, Plymouth County.) Jan. 2: 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Field parties 4; field party hours, foot 16½, car 14½; field party miles, foot 14½, car 115; feeder observers 1; feeder party hours 4. Cloudy a.m.; partly cloudy p.m. Temp. 21-32 F.; wind: 0-10 mph from NNE. 14" snow cover; river and creeks two-thirds frozen.

Comments: The Great Blue Heron appeared sickly. It paid no attention to the observer who was in plain sight only 100 feet away.

Observers: Carol and Larry Farmer (compiler), Brad and Marla Grier, Bill Huser, Bob Livermore, Jerry Probst, Pat and Paul Williams.

37. YELLOW RIVER FOREST (Center NE corner S8, T96N, R3W.) Dec. 23: 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Field parties 4; field party hours, foot 11, car 20; field party miles, foot 15, car 245. Temp. 34-42 F; wind: 0-5 mph from S. Fog a.m., overcast p.m.; 0-1 inch snow; most water open.

Observers: Florence Albright, Francis Arness, Alan Branhagen, Garth Carlson, Darwin Koenig (compiler), Paul Koenig, Marlene Michel, Andy Nimrod,

## Fencerows Are For The Birds

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### Introduction

If asked to list the most important avian habitats in Iowa, your response might include pothole marshes, riparian woodlands, or relic prairie tracts. These remnants of the habitat conditions that existed before human settlement do indeed constitute a valuable wildlife resource, but in a state where 80 percent of the land area is cropland (USDA 1981:418), another habitat category certainly could be added to the list — fencerows. Fencerows are a familiar sight as one drives Iowa's major highways and back roads, and according to a recent study (Rodenhouse and Best, in press), an average section in Story County contains 3.7 km of fencerows. Not all fencerows are alike. Some are narrow strips comprised largely of herbaceous vegetation; others are wider and may contain a continuous canopy of shrubs and trees.

Many authors have stressed the importance of fencerows for wildlife, but most reports (e.g., Edminster 1938, Dambach 1948) date back at least three decades when agricultural practices differed markedly from those of today. Despite the frequent occurrence of fencerows, the intensity of use that they receive from birds and the species composition of birds using them have been poorly documented. Recently, Shalaway (1979) documented bird abundances in various fencerow habitats in Michigan, but his results were based only on nest searches and, of necessity, were confined to the breeding season. Current intensification of agriculture threatens the remaining fencerow habitat as small farms are consolidated into larger cropping units. The purpose of our study was to document bird usage of three different fencerow habitat types during three seasons of the year in central Iowa. It is hoped that this report will better acquaint people with the value of fencerows as avian habitat and that it will stimulate a greater urgency in preserving this living space for birds.

### Methods

Our study was conducted in Story County, Iowa, where the landscape is dominated by large expanses of flat to gently rolling cultivated land planted primarily to corn and soybeans. Three fencerow habitat types were selected as study sites: herbaceous (1650 m of fencerow sampled), herbaceous with scattered trees and shrubs (1725 m), and continuous trees and shrubs (1550 m). (See results for a description of the vegetation associated with each fencerow habitat type.) All fencerow were bordered by cultivated crop fields, planted either to corn or soybeans. Birds were censused along the fencerow study sites from May through November 1978 and during March and April 1979. The winter of 1978-79 (December-February) was particularly severe, and some of the fencerow were completely covered with snow. Consequently, bird counts were not made during that period. Birds generally were censused during the early morning; days with inclement weather were avoided. (See Table 1 for the number of times each fencerow habitat type was counted during the respective seasons.) Portions of fencerow within 50 m of roadsides or other uncultivated land were excluded from the counts. Because fencerows are relatively narrow, we assumed that all birds present were observed during a given count. The number of individuals of each bird species observed per fencerow was determined and then converted to number of birds per 1 km. This



facilitated comparisons among the different fencerow habitat types.

Vegetation along each fencerow censused was sampled in August 1978. Percentage canopy cover was estimated for each species found within 1-m<sup>2</sup> quadrats placed at 12.5-m intervals along each fencerow.

#### Results

Vegetation along herbaceous fencerows consisted mainly of grasses, with green foxtail (*Setaria faberi*), Canada wild rye (*Elymus canadensis*), bluegrass (*Poa* sp.), common quackgrass (*Acropyron repens*), sloughgrass (*Spartina* sp.), and bromegrass (*Bromus inermis*) being the dominant species. Common forbs included groundcherry (*Physalis* sp.), wild rose (*Rosa* sp.), and common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*). Woody vegetation was rare along herbaceous fencerows.

Herbaceous fencerows with scattered trees and shrubs were dominated by forbs and grasses, both of which had similar canopy coverages. Major forb species included great ragweed (*Ambrosia trifida*), hemp (*Cannabis sativa*), wild rose, smartweed (*Polygonum* spp.), common milkweed, and groundcherry. Green foxtail, bromegrass, and Canada wild rye were among the important grasses. Red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) was the most common woody plant species.

Fencerows with continuous trees and shrubs had greatly reduced herbaceous ground cover. Virginia wild rye (*Elymus virginicus*), cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*), morning glory (*Ipomoea purpurea*), bromegrass, wild raspberry (*Rubus* sp.), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), and wild lettuce (*Lactuca* sp.) were the most abundant species. The continuous tree and shrub cover consisted mainly of hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), dogwood (*Cornus* sp.), honey locust (*Cleditsia triacanthos*), *Prunus* spp., elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*), black locust (*Robinia psuedoacacia*) and American elm (*Ulmus americana*). Within the two fencerow habitat types containing woody vegetation, shrubs usually were less than 3 m tall and trees less than 6 m.

The two bird species occurring in greatest abundance along herbaceous fencerows during both spring and summer were the Brown-headed Cowbird, a brood parasite, and one of its host species, the Vesper Sparrow (Table 1). (Scientific names of the bird species are listed in Table 1.) Twelve bird species total were observed during the three seasons along this fencerow habitat type. Herbaceous fencerows evidently are used least by birds during the fall (with the possible exception of winter).

During spring and summer, members of the subfamily Icterinae and, to a lesser extent, those belonging to the subfamily Emberizinae dominated the avifauna found along fencerows with scattered trees and shrubs. Among the most abundant bird species were the Brown-headed Cowbird, Vesper Sparrow, and Song Sparrow; also included were flocks of Red-winged and Brewer's Blackbirds. In fall, the two most commonly observed taxa were the subfamily Emberizinae and the family Phasianidae. Nine species of sparrows were seen, as well as fairly large numbers of Northern Bobwhite and Ring-necked Pheasants. Thirty-eight bird species in total were observed during the three seasons along fencerows with scattered trees and shrubs, and as with herbaceous fencerows, the fewest bird species were seen in the fall.

Along fencerows composed of continuous trees and shrubs, the major bird taxa represented were Emberizinae, Icterinae, Picidae, and Parulinae. Individual bird species were commonly observed included the Brown-headed Cowbird (spring and summer only), Vesper Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, House Sparrow, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Black-capped Chickadee, House Wren, Eastern Kingbird, and Mourning Dove (spring and summer only). Five species of warblers were found only along fencerows with continuous trees and shrubs. There

was less seasonal change in species composition of the avian community found along this fencerow habitat type than along fencerows with scattered trees and

Table 1. Bird species observed along different fencerow types in central Iowa. Values represent frequency of occurrence (% of counts during which birds were observed) and average number of birds observed during counts (expressed per 10,000 m of fencerow).

Species	Fencerow Type								
	Herbaceous			Scattered trees and shrubs			Continuous trees and shrubs		
	Spring (2) b	Summer (6)	Fall (3)	Spring (5)	Summer (8)	Fall (4)	Spring (3)	Summer (8)	Fall (5)
Northern bobwhite ( <i>Colinus virginianus</i> )	--	--	--	20% 6	--	25% 23* c	--	--	20% 1
Ring-necked pheasant ( <i>Phasianus colchicus</i> )	--	--	--	40% 5	--	25% 23	--	--	80% 21
Sora ( <i>Porzana carolina</i> )	--	--	33% 2	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mourning dove ( <i>Zenaidura macroura</i> )	--	17% 1	--	--	25% 2	--	66% 13	63% 5	--
Yellow-billed cuckoo ( <i>Coccyzus americanus</i> )	--	--	--	--	13% 1	--	--	38% 3	20% 2
Black-billed cuckoo ( <i>C. erythrophthalmus</i> )	--	--	--	--	38% 4	--	--	25% 2	20% 7
Short-eared owl ( <i>Asio flammeus</i> )	50% 3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Northern flicker ( <i>Colaptes auratus</i> )	--	--	--	20% 5	13% 1	--	33% 3	63% 6	40% 10
Red-bellied woodpecker ( <i>Melanerpes carolinus</i> )	--	--	--	--	13% 1	--	--	--	--
Red-headed woodpecker ( <i>M. erythrocephalus</i> )	--	--	--	--	13% 1	--	33% 2	13% 2	40% 3
Hairy woodpecker ( <i>Picoides villosus</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	20% 1
Downy woodpecker ( <i>P. pubescens</i> )	--	--	--	40% 2	--	--	66% 5	25% 2	100% 15
Least flycatcher ( <i>Empidonax minimus</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	13% 4	20% 3
Willow flycatcher ( <i>E. traillii</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	40% 8
Eastern kingbird ( <i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i> )	50% 6	50% 4	--	20% 3	25% 2	--	33% 2	25% 5	40% 26
Horned lark ( <i>Eremophila alpestris</i> )	50% 3	33% 3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Barn swallow ( <i>Hirundo rustica</i> )	--	--	--	--	13% 2	--	--	--	--
Blue jay ( <i>Cyanocitta cristata</i> )	--	--	--	20% 3	13% 1	25% 2	--	25% 2	--
American crow ( <i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	--	33% 3	50% 11	20% 2
Black-capped chickadee	--	--	--	20% 1	25% 2	25% 4	33% 6	63% 7	40% 5



[illegible]

Species	Fencerow Type								
	Herbaceous			Scattered trees and shrubs			Continuous trees and shrubs		
	Spring (2) <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup>	Summer (6)	Fall (3)	Spring (5)	Summer (8)	Fall (4)	Spring (3)	Summer (8)	Fall (5)
Dark-eyed junco ( <i>Junco hyemalis</i> )	--	--	--	20% 5	--	50% 21	33% 2	--	20% 26*
American tree sparrow-- ( <i>Spizella arborea</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	25% 6	66% 7	--	20% 3
Chipping sparrow ( <i>S. passerina</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	25% 2	--	13% 1	--
Field sparrow ( <i>S. pusilla</i> )	--	--	--	20% 9	--	25% 2	--	--	--
Harris sparrow ( <i>Zonotrichia querula</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	25% 6	33% 9	--	20% 22*
White-crowned sparrow ( <i>Z. leucophrys</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	25% 2	33% 2	--	--
White-throated sparrow ( <i>Z. albicollis</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	25% 17*	33% 4	--	40% 18
Fox sparrow ( <i>Passerella iliaca</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	25% 7	--	--	--
Swamp sparrow ( <i>Melospiza georgiana</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	20% 4
Song sparrow ( <i>M. melodia</i> )	--	--	--	60% 10	50% 4	25% 4	66% 4	88% 16	60% 8
Lapland longspur 50% 91* ( <i>Calcarius lapponicus</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Red-winged blackbird -- ( <i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i> )	--	--	--	20% 246*	38% 2	--	--	--	--
Eastern meadowlark -- ( <i>Sturnella magna</i> )	--	17% 1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Western meadowlark ( <i>S. neglecta</i> )	--	--	--	20% 3	--	--	33% 2	--	20% 2
Brewer's blackbird ( <i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i> )	--	--	--	20% 6	13% 18*	--	--	13% 7	20% 54*
Common grackle ( <i>Quiscalus quiscula</i> )	--	--	--	--	25% 2	--	--	13% 1	--
Brown-headed cowbird ( <i>Molothrus ater</i> )	50% 9	100% 35	--	80% 113*	88% 18	--	66% 19	88% 25	--
Northern oriole ( <i>Icterus galbula</i> )	--	--	--	--	--	--	33% 2	13% 2	40% 7
American goldfinch ( <i>Carduelis tristis</i> )	--	--	--	--	50% 5	--	33% 4	38% 4	20% 2
House sparrow ( <i>Passer domesticus</i> )	--	--	--	20% 6	25% 4	--	33% 2	63% 21	20% 2

<sup>a</sup>Spring = March - May, Summer = June - August, Fall = September - November.

<sup>b</sup>Number of counts upon which the data are based.

\*=includes observation of a flock.



shrubs. A total of 47 bird species was observed along fencerows with continuous trees and shrubs during the three seasons.

Among the bird species that we observed using fencerows are three that are included on the "blue list" for North America (Tate and Tate 1982): Short-eared Owl, Loggerhead Shrike, and Dickcissel. Blue-listed species reportedly have shown clear, recent signs of population decline. The Short-eared Owl does not breed in Iowa (Roosa 1977), but is a common migrant (J. J. Dinsmore, pers. comm.). Loggerhead Shrikes prefer to nest in isolated small trees or clumps of brush along fencerows (Roosa 1977) and are considered threatened in Iowa. Removal of shrubby fencerows has contributed to the decline of this species. The Dickcissel nests primarily in hay fields early in the breeding season, but once hay mowing is under way and soybean plants attain an adequate size, the species will nest in soybean fields (pers. obs.). Fencerows may provide important song perches and, possibly, foraging sites at that time.

Fencerow use by birds probably is more intensive and extensive than generally recognized. Fencerows containing more shrub and tree cover generally have more plant species and greater structural complexity (i.e., more vertical strata are present). Consequently, these fencerow habitat types tend to support a more diverse avifauna (see also Dambach 1948). Fencerows may provide bird species with a variety of life history requisites, including nesting site, song perches, food, and escape cover. In many regions of the state, particularly north-central Iowa, fencerows represent important remnants of somewhat "natural" habitat in otherwise vast expanses of "corn desert." In these areas, fencerows provide critical habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Next time you generate a mental list of important bird habitats in Iowa, remember that "fencerows are for the birds."

**Acknowledgments:** We thank the landowners in Story County for allowing us to census birds along their fencerows and J. J. Dinsmore for reviewing an earlier draft of the manuscript. Financial support was provided by the Iowa Agriculture and Home Economics Experiment Station and the Iowa Academy of Science. Journal Paper No. 10865 of the Iowa Agriculture and Home Economics Experiment Station, Ames, Iowa. Project 2327.

#### Summary

Birds were censused in three fencerow habitat types (herbaceous, herbaceous with scattered trees and shrubs, and continuous trees and shrubs) in Story County, Iowa during spring, summer, and fall. During the three seasons, a total of 12 bird species was observed using fencerows with herbaceous habitat, 38 species were recorded in fencerows containing scattered trees and shrubs, and 47 species used fencerows comprised of continuous trees and shrubs.

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## IDENTIFICATION OF FEMALE GROSBEAKS

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While not impossible, female *Pheucticus* grosbeaks are certainly some of the more difficult passerines to identify. My biggest problem with most documentations I receive is that observers only describe the underparts and ignore the rest of the bird. It is very difficult to analyze these sightings based on incomplete descriptions. For all unusual female *Pheucticus* grosbeak reports, the entire bird should be described. I cannot emphasize this fact enough.

Separating the two species (and hybrids) utilizes basically the same field marks at all times of the year. However, observers should note that birds in worn plumage (either late summer or late winter) can become faded and may lose some of these characteristics. When identifying female grosbeaks, the following characteristics should be noted (listed in order of importance):

(1) Underpart pattern:

Breast color: distinctly orange-buff in Black-headed; a dirty buffy-white in Rose-breasted; traces of both in hybrids.

Streaking: Rose-breasted are uniform and heavily streaked with dark brown; Black-headed are normally unstreaked except for some fine streaking along the sides of the breast; hybrids have intermediate streaking patterns (finer than Rose-breasted, more extensive than Black-headed).

Contrast with belly: On Black-headed the belly is distinctly lighter and yellower than the breast, while Rose-breasted lack any contrast between breast and belly.

(2) Head pattern: The browns tend to be darker (a dark chocolate brown) on Black-headed than on Rose-breasted (more medium brown). Rose-breasted have white or buffy-white eye lines, while they tend to be yellow on Black-headed. This field mark is variable. While white or yellow eye lines may be useful characteristics, buffy eye lines are problematical.

(3) Rump color (most visible in flight): Black-headed have a greenish rump that appears noticeably lighter than the remainder of the upperparts; Rose-breasted have rumps quite similar to their upperparts.

(4) Wing linings: Black-headed have pale yellow (lemon yellow) wing linings while Rose-breasted have darker yellow or yellow-orange wing linings. These linings are hard to see well and require comparative experience with both species to really be useful.

One additional comment for winter birds: The immature males of both species should start their pre-nuptial molt by late winter. Some individuals may start this molt a bit earlier (the timing of the molt has not been extensively studied). Observers should be careful to look for nuptial plumage characteristics on any winter bird.

An excellent description of Rose-breasted Grosbeak plumages and its molt sequence is found in Roberts, *A Manual for the Identification of the Birds of Minnesota and Neighboring States*. Unfortunately, I am not aware of a similar description of Black-headed Grosbeaks nor do I know of any articles that satisfactorily deal with this identification problem. The 1974 article in the *Wilson Bulletin* (86:1-11) contains some useful information but is difficult to use unless you are able to examine a number of specimens.

My thoughts on the four female Black-headed Grosbeak reports in Iowa during 1982 were as follows:

(1) 10 May 1982 at Amana Woods: based on underpart streaking, I would lean towards a hybrid, although it is difficult to say in absence of other field marks.

(2) 14 Jul 1982 in Dickinson Co.: I cannot identify this bird with certainty and treated it as *Pheucticus* sp. The description of the underparts is ambiguous (there weren't any heavy streaks, but it was not said to be unstreaked). The white facial stripes are closer to a Rose-



breasted rather than a Black-headed.

- (3) 29 Jul 1982 near Decorah: Probably a Black-headed based on underpart color and the lack of streaking, although other characteristics would have been useful.
- (4) 23 Nov 1982 near Elkhart: Probably a Black-headed based on the observed characteristics, especially the orangish-buff streaks on the back. This field mark indicates the bird is most likely a first-year male. Rose-breasted never have these streaks in any plumage.

One warning about grosbeak identification (for both sexes): Occasionally, one observes aberrant birds that are not characteristic of either species. These birds should not be identified in the field. We had such a bird in Ohio last year. All I can say about it is that I think it may have been a male grosbeak; I have no idea which species. Hence, I am suspicious of birds that are not completely typical of one species or the other.

(See Iowa Bird Life 52:61, 94, 124 for records 1, 2, 4 mentioned by Peterjohn. Record number 3 was not reported in Iowa Bird Life and a report from 20 May at Rush Lake, Palo Alto Co., is not discussed by Peterjohn.)

#### FIELD REPORTS WINTER 1982-1983

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#### WEATHER AND HABITAT CONDITIONS (JPSa)

The winter reporting period was noteworthy for its general mildness and lack of heavy snowfall. December was warm, cloudy, and wet: the state experienced three times the normal wetness, which exceeds the previous state record (2.54 inches in 1911) by about one inch. Streams were unusually high with some localized flooding, especially in the southeast. Temperatures in Dec were 3 to 7 degrees above normal. The warm weather continued throughout Jan and Feb -- not since 1941 have Iowa's coldest Jan temperatures been milder than those of 1983. While snowcover was persistent in the northwest, it was quite spotty in the south and east. The only major snowstorm of the period occurred in mid-Feb, but the resulting snow cover was soon dissipated by the return of uncommonly warm weather which, more than any other factor, characterized the period. One prominent indicator of this trend was the fact that the southern half of the Des Moines River was never frozen over this winter.

#### GENERAL TRENDS

Waterfowl and gulls remained late and returned early with more overwintering than usual. Glaucous Gulls appeared in Scott Co. in late Jan rather than the more usual late Dec. Northern Goshawk sightings, which began in the fall, continued into Feb (see also CBC). Migrating killdeer, bluebirds, robins, and blackbirds were widespread in late Feb. Red-headed Woodpeckers were nearly absent this winter. Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings were seen predominantly in Jan. Of the winter finches, Pine Siskin and Common Redpoll were very rare and crossbills and Evening Grosbeak unreported.

#### UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Winter records of Sora and Pectoral Sandpiper were the first for the state. Reports of two gull species, which would be new to the state list, will be reviewed by the Records Committee and outside consultants.

#### SPECIES DATA (\* = documented)

As much as possible, I have avoided duplicating reports covered under the Christmas Bird Count.

Western Grebe: I failed to include two records in the fall report: 10 Oct 1982 at Saylorville Res. (JPSc) and a dark phase specimen from Greenfield, Adair Co., on 27 Nov now at Iowa State University (JD).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** Three late records: 3 Dec at Red Rock Res. (RT), 4-15 Dec at Saylorville Res. (JPSc), and 30 Dec at Lock 15, Davenport (Judy Linder fide PP). One at DeSoto NWR on 5 Aug 1981 (IBL 51:115) was seen by Ruth Phipps et al., not John Robinson.

**Great Blue Heron:** Several lingered into or through the winter: 10 Dec at Red Rock Res. (RT), 18 Dec in Harrison Co. (TB et al.), 26 Dec in Polk Co. (RC), 23 Jan at Council Bluffs (Mark Lund, Kelly Clark fide TB), se. of Rhodes, Marshall Co. (HZ), and 19 Feb at Ledges SP (PM).

**Cattle Egret:** Two corrections: those reported for 23, 30 Apr 1982 (IBL 52:54) were Great Egrets (JR) and 1 at Dewey's Pasture on 16 May 1982 (IBL 52:54) was seen by Rex Johnson not John Robinson.

**Tundra Swan:** 6 at Lock and Dam 9 on 19 Feb (DK) were unusually early.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** 6 were at Willow Sl. on 27 Feb (BLW).

**Snow Goose:** 309 were still at Rathbun Res. on 8 Jan (RC); 1 wintered at Montezuma (DK); and the first were in Mills Co. on 19 Feb (BLW).

**Ross' Goose:** 1 was collected at Riverton A. on 14 Jan (Erv Klaas fide JD).

**Canada Goose:** Late migrants were in Butler Co. on 25 Dec (TJS), at L. Macbride on 31 Dec (TK), and over Iowa City on 15 Jan (TJS). Wintering flocks were at Rock Valley (JV), Spirit L. (DCH), and Rathbun Res. (RC). On 30 Jan a flock of 21 were n. of Des Moines (RL). The first migrants were noted on 18 Feb in Mills Co. (BLW), on 19 Feb at Cone M. (TK), and 21 Feb at Spirit L. (DCH).

**Wood Duck:** 1 was late on 10 Dec at L. Manawa (TB, BPa); 1 wintered at Rock Valley (JV); and early migrants were at Willow Sl. on 23 Feb (BLW), at Credit L. on 24 Feb (PP, LL), and at Cone M. on 26 Feb (TJS).

**Green-winged Teal:** 2 were late at Saylorville Res. on 6 Dec (JPSc) and early arrivals were 1 in SE Story Co. on 19 Feb (Ted LaGrange fide JD), 3 at Rathbun Res. on 21 Feb (RC), and 1 at DeSoto NWR on 24 Feb (TB, SK).

**American Black Duck:** 1 was s. of Council Bluffs from 16 Dec to 24 Jan (TB et al.), 1 wintered at Montezuma (DK), 6 were at Saylorville Res. from 10 Dec to 30 Jan (JPSc), and the first migrant was noted at Coralville Res. on 19 Feb (MN).

**Mallard:** Many wintered with over 1000 at Rathbun Res. (RC). Migrants first appeared on 19 Feb at Cone M. (TK) and Coralville Res. (MN).

**Northern Pintail:** Several wintered. Migrants appeared with Mallards.

**Northern Shoveler:** 4 were at L. Manawa on 4 Dec (BPa, LPa) and 3 arrived at Willow Sl. on 20 Feb (BLW).

**Gadwall:** 1 wintered at Rock Valley (JV). Early migrants were in SE Story Co. on 19 Feb (LaGrange fide JD) and Cone M. on 26 Feb (TJS).

**American Wigeon:** Several remained at IPL Ponds, Pottawattamie Co., until 28 Jan (TB et al.) and 1 wintered at Rock Valley (JV). The first returned to Story Co. on 19 Feb (LaGrange fide JD) and Willow Sl. on 20 Feb (BLW).

**Canvasback:** The earliest of several reports was at Cone M. on 19 Feb (TK).

**Redhead:** There were Feb reports from seven locations with the earliest at Bettendorf on 13 Feb (PP, EA, DT).

**Ring-necked Duck:** The earliest at six Feb locations were on 19 Feb at LeClaire (PP) and Cone M. (TK).

**Greater Scaup:** Details were provided for 6 at IPL Ponds on 22 Feb (BPa) and 11 at DeSoto NWR on 24 Feb (\*TB, BPa, SK).

**Lesser Scaup:** A female wintered at Iowa City (TJS); 8 were at Saylorville Res. on 30 Jan (JPSc); and the first migrants were noted at Cone M. on 19 Feb (TK).

**Oldsquaw:** A female was at Red Rock Res. from 19 Dec to 14 Jan (RT, GB, m.ob.).

**Common Goldeneye:** 4 remained at IPL Ponds until 13 Jan (BLW) and 42 had returned there by 19 Feb (BPa, LPa).

**Bufflehead:** 2 had arrived at IPL Ponds by 23 Feb (Melba Wigg fide TB).

**Hooded Merganser:** A male remained at IPL Ponds until 1 Feb (BPa, LPa) and one wintered at Montezuma (DK). Early arrivals were at Rathbun



- Res. on 21 Feb (RC), at DeSoto NWR on 24 Feb (TB, SK, BPa), and Willow Sl. on 25 Feb (BLW).
- Common Merganser:** 400 were at Red Rock Res. on 12 Dec (MM). Migrants were noted moving back to many interior locations by 19, 20 Feb (m.ob.).
- Bald Eagle:** The peak count on the Mississippi R. from Guttenburg to Oakville was 399 on 4 Feb (PP). Migrants were noted in many interior locations in late Feb.
- Northern Harrier:** 13 were noted in Appanoose Co. during the period (RC). Other reports were of 1-2 birds.
- Sharp-shinned Hawk:** The only reports were from Grammer Grove WA on 31 Dec, 9 Jan (BPr, MPr) and Johnson Co. on 3 Feb (TJS).
- Cooper's Hawk:** 1 was killing starlings at Cherokee on 20, 25 Jan (DBi).
- Northern Goshawk:** Details or documentation were received for the following non-CBC sightings: Centerville on 26 Dec, 22 Jan (RC), Pleasantville on 7 Jan (\*RT), George Wyth SP on 11 Jan (\*FM), Cherokee on 11, 16 Jan \*MBre, DBi), Big Creek SP on 15 Jan (\*TB, DB, BJR, SR), NW Hardin Co. on 28 Jan (\*MPr), Warren Co. on 30 Jan (\*JSi), Coralville Res. on 12, 13 Feb (MN, m.ob.), and at least two in Boone Co. on 18, 19 Feb (\*Kevin Martin, \*Mike Traub, \*Todd Walrod, \*Doug Phillips). All were adults.
- Red-shouldered Hawk:** Wintering birds were found at Montezuma (DK) and George Wyth SP (FM, RKM, RuH). Another was seen from the air at Toolsboro on 8 Jan (PP).
- Red-tailed Hawk:** A Harlan's Hawk was reported from IPL Ponds on 19 Feb (TB, BJR, BPa, SK).
- Rough-legged Hawk:** There were only a few reports of a few birds (maximum of 4).
- Golden Eagle:** Immatures were seen in Allamakee Co. on 1 Jan, 19 Feb (DK).
- Gray Partridge:** 9 were in S Hardin Co. on 12 Feb (Garnita Seward fide BPr).
- Ruffed Grouse:** 1 was seen at George Wyth SP on 9 Jan (FM).
- Wild Turkey:** 24 along the Wapsipinicon R. in Scott Co. are a new location (PP). Birds at Fairview in W Sioux Co. are said to be established (JV).
- Sora:** 1 at Ventura M., Cerro Gordo Co., on 30 Dec (\*BRO) is an unusual winter record.
- American Coot:** Late birds were at L. Macbride on 12 Dec (TK) and L. Manawa on 30 Jan (Mark Lund, Kelly Clark fide TB). Singles wintered at Rock Valley (JV) and Montezuma (DK). Early arrivals were at Willow Sl. on 25 Feb (BLW) and Cone M. on 26 Feb (TJS, CJB).
- Killdeer:** 3 were at Cone M. on 2 Jan and may have wintered (TK, TJS, MN). Many migrants were evident by late Feb with the earliest on 19 Feb at Cone M. (TK), Amana (MN), and Mills Co. (BLW).
- Pectoral Sandpiper:** 1 seen at Cone M. on 19 Feb (\*TK) and again on 26 Feb (TJS, CJB) may be the first Jan-Feb record for the Midwest. At least, I could find no other records in books for nearby states or in the boldface index for American Birds/Audubon Field Notes. This species normally winters south of the equator with only rare individuals lingering in United States at the time of the Christmas Bird Count.
- Common Snipe:** 5 were at Cone M. on 2 Jan and 9 were there on 19 Feb (TK et al.).
- Bonaparte's Gull:** 5 were still at L. Macbride on 5 Dec (TK).
- Ring-billed Gull:** 4000 were at Red Rock Res. on 3 Dec (RT) and 350 were still at Rathbun Res. on 8 Jan. (RC). Ring-bills usually leave the state in mid-winter, but 6-10 remained all winter at Bettendorf (PP). Early arrivals were 10 at Cone M. on 19 Feb (TK) and 2 at DeSoto NWR on 24 Feb (TB, BPa, SK).
- Herring Gull:** Some wintered at unusual locations such as Iowa City/Coralville where 44 were counted on 25 Jan (TJS). At Lock and Dam 14, 500 were seen on 5 Feb (MN). Migrants were evident elsewhere by late Feb.
- Glaucous Gull:** A white, second year bird was at Lock and Dam 15 on 23 Jan (\*PP, \*GW). A first year bird was at Lock and Dam 14 on 30 Jan

- (\*TJS). These birds were apparently seen on other dates by many observers, but no other documentations were received.
- Rock Dove:** This is the first time I have had an excuse to include Rock Dove in the field reports. Several were noted diving on a Great Horned Owl at Ames on 2, 9 Jan (PM).
- Great Horned Owl:** An Arctic Horned Owl was reported from 13 miles w. of Cherokee on 30 Jan (DBi).
- Snowy Owl:** Five reports: 14 Dec in Pocahontas Co. (RVH, m.ob.), 16, 18 Dec in Emmet Co. (HW, RD, DHe), 1 Jan at West Union (JPSc), 10 Jan in Beuna Vista Co. (Ronald Reese fide RVH), and 4 Feb near Blairsburg (Kevin Stubbs fide JD).
- Long-eared Owl:** 1-2 were found at L. Macbride (TJS), Pleasantville (RT), Clarke Co. (BPr, MPr, PH), Big Creek SP (DDM), and Ames (Dave Webber fide JD).
- Short-eared Owl:** Singles were near Inwood, Lyon Co., on 5 Dec (DCH) and at Coralville Res. on 11 Dec (JPsa).
- Northern Saw-whet Owl:** 1-2 were found at Big Creek SP (RDM, RL, CML), Grammer Grove (BPr, m.ob.), and Fairmont Cemetery, Davenport (PP).
- Belted Kingfisher:** Several wintering birds were reported along open streams.
- Red-headed Woodpecker:** 6 birds were reported from 5 locations and many other reporters noted their absence this winter.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** 1 was at Hickory Hill P., Iowa City, on 13 Jan (TJS) and 2 overwintered at Fairmont Cemetery, Davenport (PP).
- Hairy Woodpecker:** Barb Wilson presented five years of data from one location in Mills Co. demonstrating that a few birds are consistently present throughout the year. It would take an enormous amount of work to demonstrate population shifts for this Blue Listed species. Perhaps, CBC data are sufficient for monitoring this species.
- Northern Flicker:** Red-shafted birds were noted in Mills Co. on 19 Jan (BLW) and in Cherokee Co. on 30 Jan (DBi).
- American Crow:** 1200 were at Red Rock Res. on 14 Jan (RT); 400 were eating gizzard shad at Saylorville Res. on 30 Jan (RL); and 750 wintered at Ames (HZ).
- Tufted Titmouse:** 1-2 were noted in Ames (PM), Des Moines (MM), and Council Bluffs (BLW).
- Red-breasted Nuthatch:** A few were noted at several locations with 16 sightings in Appanoose Co. during the period (RC).
- Carolina Wren:** 1 was at Cherokee on 30 Jan (\*DBi, \*MBre), an unusual location even in good years.
- Winter Wren:** Singles were noted in NE Mills Co. on 16 Dec (BLW), at Hickory Hill P. on 17 Jan (TJS), and at Lock and Dam 9 on 19 Feb (DK).
- Golden-crowned Kinglet:** The peak at Ames was 17 on 18 Dec and the numbers were down to 1-2 in Jan-Feb (PM). In Appanoose Co., 12 were found during the period (RC). They were "very common to abundant throughout the period" at Sioux Center. It would help if we had a consistent way of reporting this species.
- Eastern Bluebird:** Migrants were noted in many localities in late Feb.
- American Robin:** Only scattered wintering birds were noted, but migrants were common by late Feb.
- Northern Mockingbird:** 1 was at Red Rock Res. on 1 Jan (\*BPr, MPr, PH, RS).
- Brown Thrasher:** 1 was at a feeder in Davenport until 19 Dec (PP); another was at Hickory Hill P. on 15 Jan (TJS).
- Northern Shrike:** 4 were noted as usual in Allamakee and Winneshiek Cos. (DK). More southerly reports with details were of singles at Saylorville on 3 Dec (\*JPSc), in Cherokee Co. on 11 Dec (\*DBi), and the Nebraska side of DeSoto NWR on 24 Feb (\*TB, SK, BPa). Shall we ask these Nebraskans to stop reporting birds on their side of the refuge (which is only accessible from Iowa) or annex the whole refuge into Iowa?
- Loggerhead Shrike:** 1 was reported from Dallas Co. on 16 Dec (JZ) and 1 was at Hendrickson M. during Feb (HZ).



- Yellow-rumped Warbler:** 1 was found nw. of Cherokee on 28 Jan (\*MBre).
- Rufous-sided Towhee:** Western race birds were found at Cherokee on 6 Feb (DBi) and throughout the period at Marshalltown (Ed and Betty Savage fide BPr).
- Fox Sparrow:** 2 were nw. of Cherokee on 11 Jan (MBre) and 1 was in Iowa Co. on 19 Feb (MN).
- Lincoln's Sparrow:** 1 was in NE Mills Co. on 5 Jan (\*BLW).
- White-throated Sparrow:** 2 were at a feeder near Cherokee on 9, 11 Jan (DBi, MBre); 1 at a feeder in Iowa City on 31 Dec, 3 Feb (TK); and 1 wintered at Ames (JPSc).
- Harris' Sparrow:** Wintering birds were noted at Pleasantville (RT), Elkhart (DDM), and Ames (singing on 8 Feb, PM). One came to a feeder in Council Bluffs until 10 Jan (CFS).
- Dark-eyed Junco:** An Oregon Junco was noted in Iowa City on 12 Feb (MN).
- Lapland Longspur:** Large flocks were noted in Jan: 300 at Cone M. on 2 Jan (TK, TJS, MN), 200 in Grundy Co. on 6 Jan (MPr fide BPr), 30 in Hardin Co. on 7 Jan (BPr), 100 in Marshall Co. on 11 Jan (BPr), 300 in Muscatine Co. on 30 Jan (TJS, CJB), and 120 in Story Co. on 30 Jan (HZ). Feb reports were 3 at Ames on 2 Feb (PM), 20 at Colo on 6 Feb (HZ), and several at New Albin on 6 Feb (FL). These data suggest that many wintered in Iowa.
- Snow Bunting:** 1 at Ledges SP on 8 Dec (HZ); 67 in Floyd, Butler, and Grundy Cos. on 28 Dec (TJS); 55 in Lyon Co. on 12 Jan (DCH); 2 in Winneshiek Co. on 5 Feb (DK); and 1 in Johnson Co. on 13 Feb (TK, CJB, TJS). Although fewer were seen, the pattern is similar to that for longspurs.
- Red-winged Blackbird:** 5000 hit L. Manawa on 17 Feb (TB et al.) and flocks and territorial males were widespread across the state thereafter.
- Western Meadowlark:** 20 were singing at IPL Ponds on 17 Feb (TB et al.).
- Rusty Blackbird:** 40 were at Cone M. on 31 Dec (TJS); 30 in Iowa Co. on 19 Feb (MN); 15 in NE Mills Co. on 19 Feb (BLW).
- Brewer's Blackbird:** 2 were at Cone M. on 26 Dec, 2 Jan (TK, MN).
- Common Grackle:** The first arrived at Sioux Center on 27 Feb (JV).
- Brown-headed Cowbird:** A number overwintered.
- Purple Finch:** 2 females at Larchwood in NW Iowa on 25 Jan were unusual (DCH). Numbers were apparently normal in other areas.
- House Finch:** The House Finch banded at Ottumwa was from 26 Jun 1982, not 26 Jul as previously reported (IBL 52:94).
- Common Redpoll:** 8 at Muscatine from 20 Nov into Dec (Howard Worst fide PP) were the only ones noted.
- Pine Siskin:** 1 at Pine L. from 4 Dec to 10 Jan (Nancy Slife fide BPr) and 1 in Hickory Hill P. on 5 Jan (TJS) were the only ones reported.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## OTHER OBSERVERS

Eugene Armstrong (PP); Carl J. Bendorf (TK, TJS); Gladys Black (RT); Don Bray (TB); Roberf Duff (HW); Phyllis Harris (PBr); Russell Hays (FM); Dennis Henrickson (HW); Jim Kovanda (TB); Sandy Kovanda (TB); Christyna M. Laubach (RL); Larry Linder (PP); Robert K. Myers (FM); Mary Lou Petersen (PP); Mark Proescholdt (BPr); B. J. Rose (TB);

Sharon Rose (TB); Ramona Sommerlot (BPr); Dennis Thompson (PP).

#### COMMENTS

With this report, species follow the order set forth in the Official Checklist of Iowa Birds 1982 Edition.

According to my count, there were confirmed reports of 297 species of birds in Iowa for 1982, down from 300 in 1981 and up from 287 in 1980. All but two (Common Barn-Owl, Townsend's Solitaire) of the 275 Regular species (Pine Warbler has been added to the 274 given on the Official Checklist) were recorded. Of the Casual species, 14 of 17 were recorded (Red-necked Grebe, Snowy Egret, Prairie Falcon, Yellow Rail, King Rail, Sandhill Crane, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Burrowing Owl, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Bewick's Wren, Bohemian Waxwing, Prairie Warbler, Lark Bunting, and Sharp-tailed Sparrow. Only Surf Scoter, Ferruginous Hawk, and Pine Grosbeak were missed.

Ten Accidental species accepted by the Records Committee for 1982 include Brown Pelican, White-faced Ibis, Black Rail, Ruff, Great Black-backed Gull, Hawk Owl, Smith's Longspur, Chestnut-collared Longspur, House Finch, and Hoary Redpoll. Chestnut-collared Longspur and House Finch were new to the state list in 1982. Another gull is pending evaluation. Several Black-headed Grosbeaks were reported, but the Records Committee could not exclude these being hybrids with Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Elsewhere in this issue, Bruce Peterjohn, a regional editor of *American Birds* for our Middle-western Prairie Region has given us guidelines for field identification of female grosbeaks.

## General Notes

**Gyr Falcon in Iowa** — On 10 March 1982, Dennis Crouch, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Enforcement Agent in Iowa turned over to Iowa State University a large falcon, identified as a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), that he had received. It was only after I had prepared the specimen in late 1982 that I realized that the bird was larger than our other peregrines and that the markings were different. I then identified the bird as a dark phase Gyr Falcon (*F. rusticolus*), an identification that the IOU Records Committee agreed with when I showed them the bird.

Based on the information provided me by Dennis Crouch, the bird was found in a ditch on the John Knowles farm near Akron, Plymouth County, on or about 22 November 1981. The bird had a broken right wing and Knowles initially attempted to rehabilitate the bird. He then turned the bird over to a raptor rehabilitation center in Sioux City where the bird died. Crouch picked the bird upon 2 December 1981 and held it until I received it.

Kent et al. (1982) list the Gyr Falcon as hypothetical in Iowa. There are published sightings of Gyr Falcons in Emmet (Musgrove 1949) and Guthrie (IBL 49:24) counties and in northwest Iowa (Duecker 1978) but until now, no photos, specimens, or detailed descriptions of the species from Iowa. Thus this appears to be the first authenticated record of the Gyr Falcon in Iowa.

There is the possibility that the bird in question was an escaped falconry bird. However, it showed no obvious wear on the legs suggestive of such. Doug Trapp who ran the rehabilitation center, also noted no evidence of the bird being a falconry bird. He also wrote that Knowles said the bird was very wild and would not eat out of the hand, further indication that this was a wild bird. The tail is extremely worn and compared to other Gyr Falcons at Iowa State, the feathers appear to be missing the terminal 1-2 inches. These feathers may have broken off after the bird was injured. The sex was not determined but based on its relatively small size, the bird probably was a male.



## Literature Cited

- Duecker, S. 1978. Two visitors. *Iowa Bird Life* 48:80.
- Kent, T. H., J. J. Dinsmore, D. Koenig, M. C. Newlon, P. C. Petersen, J. Schaufenbuel, and W. R. Silcock. 1982. Official checklist of Iowa birds. *Iowa Bird Life* 52:67-76.
- Musgrove, J. W. 1949. A 1946 record of the Gyrfalcon in Emmet County. *Iowa Bird Life* 19:22-23.
- JAMES J. DINSMORE, Department of Animal Ecology, Iowa State University, Ames, Ia. 50011.

**Burrowing Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia*) in Hamilton County, Iowa** — On August 13, 1982, one of us (MJH) noticed an unfamiliar owl along a gravel road in Lyon Township, Hamilton County, Iowa, between Jewell and Kamrar. After photographing the owl and comparing the slide to references, it proved to be a Burrowing Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia*). The owl was perched on a fence post at the edge of a cornfield in the southwest quarter of section 8, T87N, R24W, near two burrows in a road embankment. On September 23rd and October 1st, one of us (DMR) watched the owl for over an hour on each occasion. It exhibited high fidelity to the site, each time being seen on one of two fenceposts near the burrows. At no time was it seen carrying food to the burrow, nor was more than one owl seen at one time. The burrows, while worn, did not appear to be sufficiently trampled to connote nesting. We presume it was an un-mated owl that randomly happened to find a suitable burrow, somewhat out of its normal range. On October 10th, a visit to the site did not produce a sighting of the owl, despite an extended visit and search of nearby fields.

This was the third sighting of a Burrowing Owl in central Iowa in approximately 16 months, the other sightings occurring in Story County (IBL 51:74-75; IBL 51:124). A slide of the owl is on file with the records committee of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. MARY JANE HATFIELD AND DEAN M. ROOSA, Ames, Iowa.

## Obituaries

Dr. Ivan L. Boyd, 77, of Baldwin City, Kansas met his death in a tragic accident on March 18, 1982 while he and a group of his college students were engaged in their annual burning of a prairie owned by Baker University. Dr. Boyd was born August 4, 1904 at Zion which is near Creston, Iowa.

He graduated from Creston High School, received his B.A. from Simpson College, his M.A. and PhD. from Iowa State College of Ames. He taught in the public schools of Atlantic, Iowa from 1927-1938, Shelby High School, 1939, and from 1941-1972 was Head of the Biology Department at Baker University at Baldwin City, Kansas. Although retired, he was acting Director of the 573 A. Wetland Prairie for the college, conducting classes in Prairie Ecology until his death.

Dr. Boyd was an avid birder watcher and an authority of ornithology in his area and the State of Kansas. His interest in ornithology began as a boy on the farm. While teaching in Atlantic, Iowa he joined the Atlantic Bird Club and became one of its most active members. He joined I.O.U. about 1938 and retained his membership after moving to Kansas. In 1949 he was co-organizer of Kansas Ornithological Society and became its first president, later serving as its Editor for several years. He and his wife organized the Baldwin Bird Club when they moved to Kansas.

Dr. Boyd was also a member of the National Audubon Society for 45 years, a

bird bander for 30 years. He usually participated in four Christmas Count each year, acting as Compiler for several. He instilled the love of nature, birds, and prairie into his hundreds of students, scouts, and other children and adults. He was honored in various ways by a number of local, state and national organizations in his numerous fields of interest and endeavors, namely, as organizer of the local annual Maple Leaf Festival in 1959; National Weather Observer of 39 years, Scoutmaster of 54 years; Beekeeper of the Year; Distinguished Citizen Award by Jaycees (twice); Baker campus named Ivan L. Boyd Arboretum.

He married Margaret Kohlman of Dubuque, Iowa in 1942. She has been a member of I.O.U. since 1936. He is survived by his wife, a son and daughter and two grandchildren. — Mrs. Margaret Boyd

Alfred J. Englehorn, 82, died of sudden heart failure February 19 in Ames. Mr. Englehorn was born March 26, 1900 near Wagner, S.D. He received his early education at Wagner Dakota State College. He received the M.S. degree in agronomy from Iowa State University in 1925 and in June joined the staff of the agronomy department at ISU.

On August 12, 1927, he was married to Letha (Norton) Englehorn, at Little Brown Church, Nashua. From 1935 to 1937 he worked at land planning consultant for the National Resources Board of the Resettlement Administration. He returned to the ISU agronomy department in 1938 as research professor of soils, devoting his time to research on land use and soil fertility problems until his retirement in 1970.

The results of much of his research were published in the Journal of the American Society of Agronomy and in bulletins by the Agricultural Experiment Station at ISU. He is listed in American Men of Science and Who's Who in the Midwest. He was a member of the Iowa Ornithologist Union for 28 years and founding member of the Ames Izaak Walton League.

He is survived by his wife, a daughter and son. — HANK ZALETEL, Colo

## Book Reviews

**The Birdwatcher's Companion** — Christopher Leaky — Hill and Wang, N.Y. — 917 p., 6 color plates — 1982 — \$29.50.

Leaky's book, subtitled "An Encyclopedic Handbook of North American Birdlife," is an alphabetically arranged introduction to the basics of ornithology. This approach tends to create more of a reference book than one to be read through, a pity since the author has an interesting style. Many terms are defined in detail, for example two and one half pages are devoted to birdwatching with a great deal of comparison between the U.S. and U.K. Overall it goes into considerably more detail than other recent attempts at this type of book and is worth serious consideration for one's library. ed.

**Falkland Island Birds** — Robin W. Woods — Anthony Nelson, Oswestry, U.K. — 47 color and 6 b. & w. photos — 1982 — \$15.00.

Woods earlier book (IBL 48:83), while much more complete, is not intended as a field guide since it is rather large and not particularly well illustrated. The excellent color photos, the by-product of a TV film shot between 1978-81, make this effort a serviceable field guide since they are coupled with its small size. All species are described reasonably adequately with comments on their breeding cycle if applicable and overall range. It would be a much better book for the prospective birding visitor than Woods' earlier work. ed.

**British Birds, Lifestyles and Habitats** — Ian Prestt — Batsford, North Pom-



fret, Vt. — 224 p., many line drawings — 1982 — \$17.95.

This new British book approaches birds from a habitat perspective assuming no previous knowledge of ornithology. It explores the variations present within apparently similar habitats which enable the resident species to co-exists. A similar approach to American birds would be interesting and a welcome change of perspective for us. ed.

## Birding Workshop

Fred Leshner will offer five successive Sunday noon through Friday noon birding workshops beginning May 29, 1983. Specific dates are May 29-June 3, June 5-10, June 12-17, June 19-24, June 26-July 1. Headquarters (housing and food) will be the University of Wisconsin Pigeon Lake Field Station near Drummond in Bayfield County, Wisconsin. In addition to birding near Pigeon Lake, field trips will be made to Ashland, Crex Meadows, Solon Springs, and Wisconsin Point at Superior. Target species range from the Common Loon and Spruce Grouse through the Least Bittern, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker and Olive-sided Flycatcher to the Connecticut Warbler and Lincoln's Sparrow. Fred is a member of the IOU, a former Minnesota Ornithologists' Union officer, currently Wisconsin Society for Ornithology vice president and member of the WSO Records Committee, a licensed bird bander, and assistant professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse. For details, write to Fred at 509 Winona St., LaCrosse, Wi. 54601 or call 608-783-1149 evenings. This is a non-credit workshop offered through the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse extended education services.

## American Ornithologists' Union

THE AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, oldest and largest of the ornithological societies in North America, is celebrating the hundredth anniversary of its founding in 1983. Its quarterly journal, THE AUK, now includes about 1,000 pages a year of papers on a wide variety of ornithological topics. The long-awaited sixth edition of the AOU Checklist of North American Birds will be published in time for the centennial meeting. If interested in knowing more about the AOU please write to Membership Chairman Dr. Gustav A. Swanson, Department of Fishery and Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, Colo. 80523.

## XIX Congressus Internationalis Ornithologicus

At the XVIII International Ornithological Congress in Moscow the International Ornithological Committee accepted the invitation of the National Museum of Natural Sciences of Canada and of the Canadian ornithological community to hold the XIX Congress in Canada. The Congress will be held in Ottawa, Canada, from 22-29 June 1986. It elected Dr. Prof. Klaus Immelmann (West Germany) as President of the Congress. Dr. Henri Ouellet (Canada) was designated as Secretary-General.

Details about the general and scientific programs, field excursions, and other activities during the Congress will be available later.

Those interested in participating in the Congress are urged to inform the Secretariat in order to obtain announcements and application forms. Correspondence should be addressed to The Secretary-General, Dr. Henri Ouellet, XIX Congressus Internationalis Ornithologicus, National Museum of Natural Sciences, National Museums of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0M8.

## A New Information System for Raptors

The Raptor Management Information System (RMIS) is a collection of published and unpublished papers, reports, and other works on raptor management and human impacts on raptors and their habitats. It currently consists of nearly 2,500 original papers, 160 keyworded notecard decks comprised of 15,000 key paragraphs from the original papers, and a computer program to retrieve partially annotated bibliographies by species, by keyword, or by any combination of keywords and-or species. A geographical index is under development, and new papers are added as they are received.

Originally designed to facilitate land-use planning and decisionmaking by government agencies and industry, the RMIS has since grown into a powerful research and environmental assessment tool for scholars, students, consultants, as well as land managers and their staff biologists. For more information write Dr. Richard R. Olendorff, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, California U.S.A. 95825, or phone commercial (916) 484-4701 or through the Federal Telephone System 468-4701.

## Old I.O.U. Files Wanted

The Department of Special Collections of the Iowa State University Library has agreed to act as the official repository for the files and records of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. All materials, deposited here will be preserved and cataloged for use by qualified scholars. The Department welcomes publications of the Union (not *Iowa Bird Life* but the *Bulletin*), correspondence, membership lists, programs, financial records, photographs, newspaper clippings and any other materials which can document the work of the Union since its beginnings.

Please send such items to: Stanley Yates, Department of Special Collections, Iowa State University Library, Ames, Iowa 50011, phone (515) 294-6672.

## I.O.U. Materials

Available from Mrs. Patricia Layton, Librarian, 1580 Linmar Dr., Cedar Rapids, Ia. 52402.

*Birding Areas of Iowa* — Peter C. Petersen, ed—1979—\$4.82 postage paid.

*Iowa Bird Life*—back issues—\$2.00 each, postage paid or inquire.

Available from Hank Zaletel, Treas., 715 West St., Colo, Ia. 50056.

Reporting Obs. of Birds Seen in Iowa, T. H. Kent—from *I.B.L.*—1981—\$2.00 postage paid.

Checklist of Iowa Birds (this issue, *I.B.L.*) \$2.00 postage paid.

*I.O.U.* Decals (for outside windows)—\$.70 postage paid.

*I.O.U.* Arm Patches—\$1.70 postage paid.

*I.O.U.* Field Checklists—1978—one .25 postage paid; 6-.60 postage paid; 12-\$1.00 postage paid; 25-\$1.60 postage paid; 50-\$3.00 postage paid.

All checks payable to The Iowa Ornithologists' Union.

## Cover

Our cover artist, Larry De Volder, is representative of the Quad-Cities since he was born in Moline, lives in East Moline and works as Purchasing Manager for Tri-City Electric in Davenport. He has been a wildlife artist for about ten years specializing in waterfowl, birds of prey, upland game birds and songbirds. He works in various water-color media and was selected by the International Replica Society to create the first International Decoy Print. He has done a Yellowlegs for our 1983 covers.